

KERRY KATE'S GOLD.

She Had Thousands of Dollars, But Starved Herself to Death.

The Old Maid Miser of James Street Died this Morning.

Nearly \$4,000 in Coin and Greenbacks Quilted in Her Bedding.

"Kerry Kate" Roche died at the Chambers Street Hospital at 11:15 o'clock this morning from the effects of starvation.

She was known to everybody in the ward, and everybody knew that she was a miser, and that she was a miser.

She had existed for years without apparent means of support, living on what would be called a Madison Avenue family.

Mrs. O'Toole rapped at Katie's door on the third floor, near the Chambers Street Hospital, where she died this morning.

They failed in an attempt to burst in the door, for it was double-barred on the inside, but they gained entrance to the room by way of the fire-escape on the rear of the building.

"Kerry Kate's" little, bent form lay on the floor. She was motionless and made futile efforts to arise.

They untied the doors and sent for an ambulance. The ambulance surgeon declared that Katie Roche was dying from starvation.

There was a tradition in the Fourth Ward that Kerry Kate had a "bundle of money" hoarded away, but the two miserable rooms that were called home for twenty years did not indicate it.

One of these rooms, with windows opening upon the court between the front and rear tenements, was fifteen feet square. The other was little more than a dark closet.

The larger room was heaped up with filthy, vermilion-faced, scraps of old iron and other junk, and in the dark closet was a filthy mattress on the floor.

On Kerry Kate, though she had done nothing in twenty years to earn any money, was an annual of her \$7 rent for those two rooms as was the first of the month in coming round.

And the two policemen remained behind, when the ambulance drove away with the protesting old woman, to search the place.

They tossed and tumbled the rage and junk about for three hours, and when they had done they were black with dirt and grime; but they had discovered that which would make a foundation for a romance.

In the miserable old mattress which had been Katie Roche's bed, they found a veritable gold mine.

Here was a strip of yellow flannel, like a bit, only that it was ten feet long. It was about two inches wide, and was carefully sewed together. Inside this belt were 200 gold pieces. They were English sovereigns and American gold pieces, all bearing dates between 1860 and 1880.

The eyes of the policemen grew big in astonishment when this belt was found, but they continued their search of the rooms, and presently they found a bundle tied up in an old handkerchief.

This bundle contained two bank books. One was an account with the Banker Street Savings Bank, book No. 226,490. The account was in the name of "Catherine Roche. It was opened Jan. 31, 1862, and the last entry was March 11, 1929, when Katie drew \$55.52, leaving \$1.10 to her credit.

There was another bank book, too, on the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank. This was in the name of "Daniel Roche or Niece." The account was opened June 23, 1865 and closed with a debit of \$93, drawn Feb. 11, 1929, leaving a balance due "Daniel Roche or Niece," of \$1,316.

Hanging on the wall of this dark den was an old and colorful diamond shirt, which looked as if it had been dragged in the gutter. In the waistband of this garment the officers found a quantity of English sovereigns.

An old tin tomato can, apparently tossed into a corner of the room, was found to contain coin and greenbacks to the amount of \$10.67.

Across the woman's feet when she was found was a piece of old yellow satin, and it was found to contain several gold sovereigns of the date 1862.

Tucked away under heaps of old rags and bits of old iron were found rolls of bull, gold, eagles and double eagles, dating as far back as 1850, and some gold coins which were hoarded between two three-cornered pieces of flannel.

The policemen, having thoroughly ransacked the squalid rooms of Kerry Kate, took their find to the Oak street station, where they were waiting for the ambulance to arrive.

The aggregate of Kate Roche's hoardings was about \$1,700, yet the old cook-stove, tumble-down couch, two chairs and mattress that comprised her furniture would not bring one dollar under the auctioneer's hammer, and she was starving when discovered.

Katie Roche's history, as told by her oldest neighbors, is a short one.

She came from County Kerry, Ireland, forty years ago, and has been famous in the Fourth Ward for her penuriousness ever since. She never begged and she never bought anything.

James Street, who has made his home for thirty years on the street, says that he never saw her.

"Old Kate used to have an uncle, Dan Roche, and a brother, whose name was Dan, too, I think. They've been dead these twenty years."

"She used to sell cabbage and other vegetables at the corner. Kate would go to Washington Market and bring home the stuff to sell on her head."

"She never was married, and she wouldn't let any one go into her room."

The wife of Dan Haggerty, who has lived at 24 James Street these thirty years, says: "Kerry Kate never drank, and I don't think she ate very much. She was always about looking out for vegetables and other things that nobody else would buy. She'd buy cabbage heads that were spoiled and which were fit for dogs. That was the sort of stuff she lived on. She sometimes had a pair of beer, and I'll take my oath, it was the same little pair that she got in for thirty years."

Mrs. O'Toole says that Kate Roche never had any callers. Nobody seemed to be well enough acquainted to call her a friend.

Kate was for many years housekeeper for the big tenement, but resigned two years ago.

Her living expenses did not exceed \$60 a year besides her rent, and on the first of the month she always got change for a \$5 gold piece at Cook's liquor store.

The attention of the Board of Health was called frequently to Kerry Kate's room, and some time ago they compelled her to take a bath.

She attended St. James's Roman Catholic Church twice a year, on Christmas and again on New Year's day, but that was the extent of her churchgoing.

When she was found yesterday she was doubled up on the floor, her knees bent close to her chin and her frame so rigid that she could not be straightened out. She was given about the policemen entering her room to rob her. But she would tell nothing; always saying impatiently: "Wait a minute! Wait a minute! By and by I will tell you."

Deputy Coroner Donlin made an autopsy on the old woman's body, and ascertained that death came from general debility.

On his permit the body was removed by an undertaker.

HE RECOVERED IT.

(From Judge.)

Rogers (in the crowd on the "Elevated")—Excuse me, but can't you move a little, please? I've lost something!

Rogers (with a sigh of relief)—Thanka, I've got it; was only my breast!

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(From Judge.)

Algeron Gilroy (who has missed his boat, with his new full-back London top-coat on, and who was impatiently to duck-hunt, but who was with that life-preserver, I'm all right!)

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Philanthropic Party—You said your family were starving and I gave you a dime. Now I find you spending it for liquor.

Sao-Fred Party—Well, you see, friend, I'm a miser and I have to drink to keep up my courage to face them.

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